

Amendments to the Abstract:

~~The invention relates to flexible risers system for~~ Flexible riser systems are used to transfer [[of]] hydrocarbons between a sea bed installation and a vessel [[(10)]] floating at the sea surface. The riser [[(18)]] is provided with a protection mechanism to protect means (20) ~~for protecting~~ the riser [[(18)]] from impacts. The protection mechanism means (20) covers at least the upper part of the riser [[(18)]] and may be retractable to an in-active position. When in operation, the riser protection mechanism means (20) is either suspended from the vessel [[(10)]] or from a submerged turret buoy, forming part of a mooring system for the vessel, [[(10).]] At its lower end, the protection mechanism means (20) is provided with an annular body [[(22)]] surrounding the riser, [[(18),]] the annular body [[(22)]] having sufficient weight to provide a downwardly acting force in the riser protection mechanism, means (20), causing a stretch or a tension in the riser protection mechanism. means (20).